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Israel has committed genocide in the Gaza Strip, UN Commission finds

16 September 2025

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GENEVA – Israel has committed genocide against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on

the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel said in a new [report](#) today. The Commission urges Israel and all States to fulfil their legal obligations under international law to end the genocide and punish those responsible for it.

The Commission has been investigating the events on and since 7 October 2023 for the last two years, and concluded that Israeli authorities and Israeli security forces committed four of the five genocidal acts defined by the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, namely killing, causing serious bodily or mental harm, deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about the destruction of the Palestinians in whole or in part, and imposing measures intended to prevent births.

Explicit statements by Israeli civilian and military authorities and the pattern of conduct of the Israeli security forces indicate that the genocidal acts were committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, Palestinians in the Gaza Strip as a group.

“The Commission finds that Israel is responsible for the commission of genocide in Gaza,” said Navi Pillay, Chair of the Commission. “It is clear that there is an intent to destroy the Palestinians in Gaza through acts that meet the criteria set forth in the Genocide Convention.”

“The responsibility for these atrocity crimes lies with Israeli authorities at the highest echelons who have orchestrated a genocidal campaign for almost two years now with the specific intent to destroy the Palestinian group in Gaza,” Pillay said. “The Commission also finds that Israel has failed to prevent and punish the commission of genocide, through failure to investigate genocidal acts and to prosecute alleged perpetrators.”

The report is based on all the Commission’s prior investigations, as well as factual and legal findings in relation to attacks in Gaza carried out by Israeli forces, and the conduct and statements of Israeli authorities from 7 October 2023 until 31 July 2025. The Commission’s findings are based on a comprehensive examination of the underlying acts of genocide (*actus reus*) and genocidal intent (*dolus specialis*).

In establishing the genocidal acts, the Commission examined the Israeli military operations in Gaza, including killing and seriously harming unprecedented numbers of Palestinians; imposing a total siege, including blocking humanitarian aid leading to starvation; systematically destroying the healthcare and education systems in Gaza; committing systematic acts of sexual and gender based violence; directly targeting children; carrying out systematic and widespread attacks on religious and cultural sites; and disregarding the orders of the International Court of Justice.

In establishing genocidal intent, the Commission applied the “only reasonable inference” standard set forth by the International Court of Justice in the case of *Bosnia v. Serbia*. The Commission analysed statements made by Israeli authorities and concluded that those statements are direct evidence of genocidal intent. The Commission also analysed the pattern of conduct of Israeli authorities and the Israeli security forces in Gaza, including imposing starvation and inhumane conditions of life for Palestinians in Gaza, and found that genocidal intent was the only reasonable inference that could be concluded from the nature of their operations.

“Israel has flagrantly disregarded the orders for provisional measures from the International Court of Justice and warnings from Member States, UN offices, human rights organisations and civil society groups, and continued the strategy of destruction of the Palestinians in Gaza,” said Pillay. “The Commission finds that the Israeli authorities had no intention to change their course of actions. On the contrary, Israeli authorities have persisted and continued with their genocidal campaign in Gaza for almost two years now. Israel must immediately end the genocide in Gaza and comply fully with the orders for provisional measures of the International Court of Justice,” she added.

The acts of Israeli political and military leaders are attributable to the State of Israel. The Commission therefore concluded that the State of Israel bears responsibility for the failure to prevent genocide, the commission of genocide and the failure to punish the perpetrators of genocide against the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

The Commission also concluded that Israeli President Isaac Herzog, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and then Defence Minister Yoav Gallant, have incited the commission of genocide and that Israeli authorities have failed to take action against them to punish this incitement. The Commission has not fully assessed statements by other Israeli political and military leaders and considers that they too should be assessed to determine whether they constitute incitement to commit genocide.

The Commission urges the Government of Israel to comply immediately with its international legal obligations, including to end the genocide in the Gaza Strip and fully implement the provisional measures orders of the International Court of Justice.

Israel must end its policy of starvation, lift the siege and facilitate and ensure the unimpeded access of humanitarian aid at scale and unhindered access of all United Nations staff, including UNRWA and OHCHR international staff, and all recognized international humanitarian agencies delivering and coordinating aid. The Commission calls on Israel to immediately end the activities of the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation.

The Commission recommended that Member States cease the transfer of arms and other equipment that may be used for the commission of genocidal acts to Israel; ensure individuals and corporations in their territories and within their jurisdiction are not involved in aiding and assisting the commission of genocide or incitement to commit genocide; and take action on accountability through investigations and legal proceedings against individuals or corporations that are involved in the genocide directly or indirectly.

“The international community cannot stay silent on the genocidal campaign launched by Israel against the Palestinian people in Gaza. When clear signs and evidence of genocide emerge, the absence of action to stop it amounts to complicity,” said Pillay. “Every day of inaction costs lives and erodes the credibility of the international community. All States are under a legal obligation to use all means that are reasonably available to them to stop the genocide in Gaza,” she added.

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Read the full report [here](#).

Background: The [UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel](#) was established by the [UN Human Rights Council](#) on 27 May 2021 to “investigate, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in Israel, all alleged violations of international humanitarian law and all alleged violations and abuses of international human rights law leading up to and since 13 April 2021.” [Resolution A/HRC/RES/S-30/1](#) further requested the commission of inquiry to “investigate all underlying root causes of recurrent tensions, instability and protraction of conflict, including systematic discrimination and repression based on national, ethnic, racial or religious identity.”

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